

Oral Language Development



Second Language Learners

Oral Language in Perspective

*We listen a book a day,
talk a book a week,
read a book a month,
and write a book a year.*

Loban, 1980



Oral language is so pervasive, we take it for granted. It is the bulk of our day-to-day communications and the primary mode for discourse throughout the world.

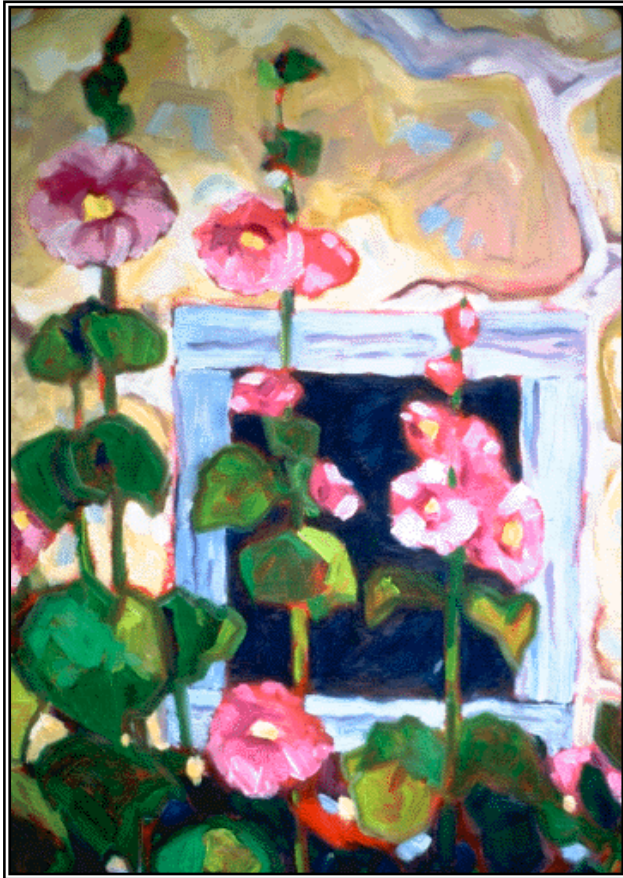
Oral Language and ESL Learners

- **Students need to engage in:**
 - Task-directed talk
 - Teacher talk
 - Student-to-student talk
 - Group talk
 - Meaningful, content-based talk



Listening, Speaking, Reading

The Relationship

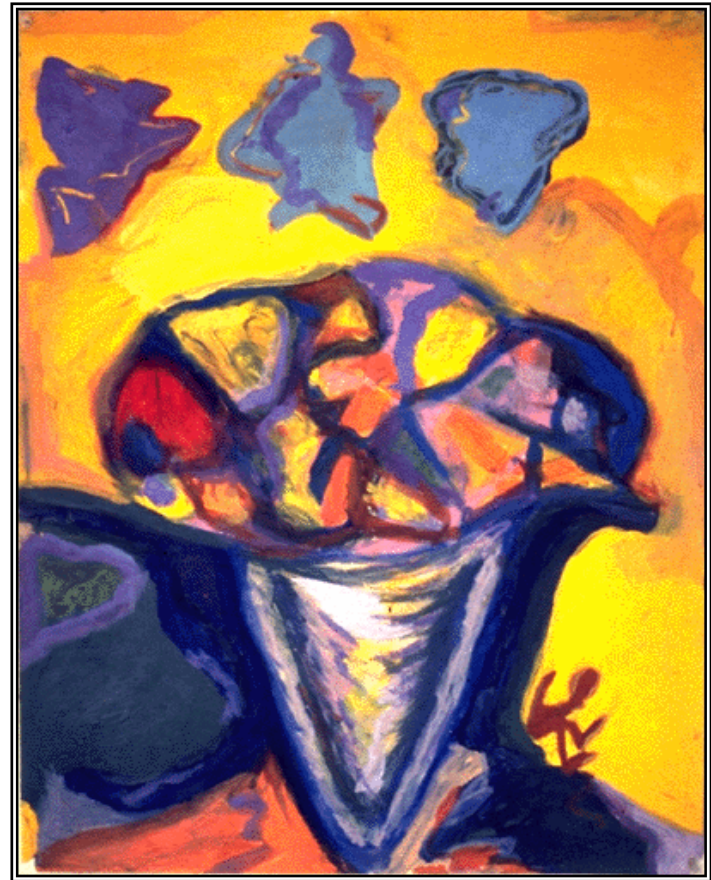


- Oral and written language must be integrated
- Oral and written language usually occur together naturally
- They intermingle as we go about our daily lives

Listening, Speaking, Reading

The Relationship

- **L1 Acquisition:**
 - Children become grammatically competent speakers by about age 5
 - Vocabulary expansion continues at a rapid pace
 - Competence in reading and writing occurs much later
 - Oral language development occurs much faster and earlier



Listening, Speaking, Reading

The Relationship



- **L2 Acquisition:**
 - For those with little L1 literacy, basic oral language competence is likely to emerge earlier than competence in reading/writing
 - For older students, the pattern reverses – written English proficiency will develop first, then oral
 - Students do not need to be fully competent oral English speakers in order to read in L2

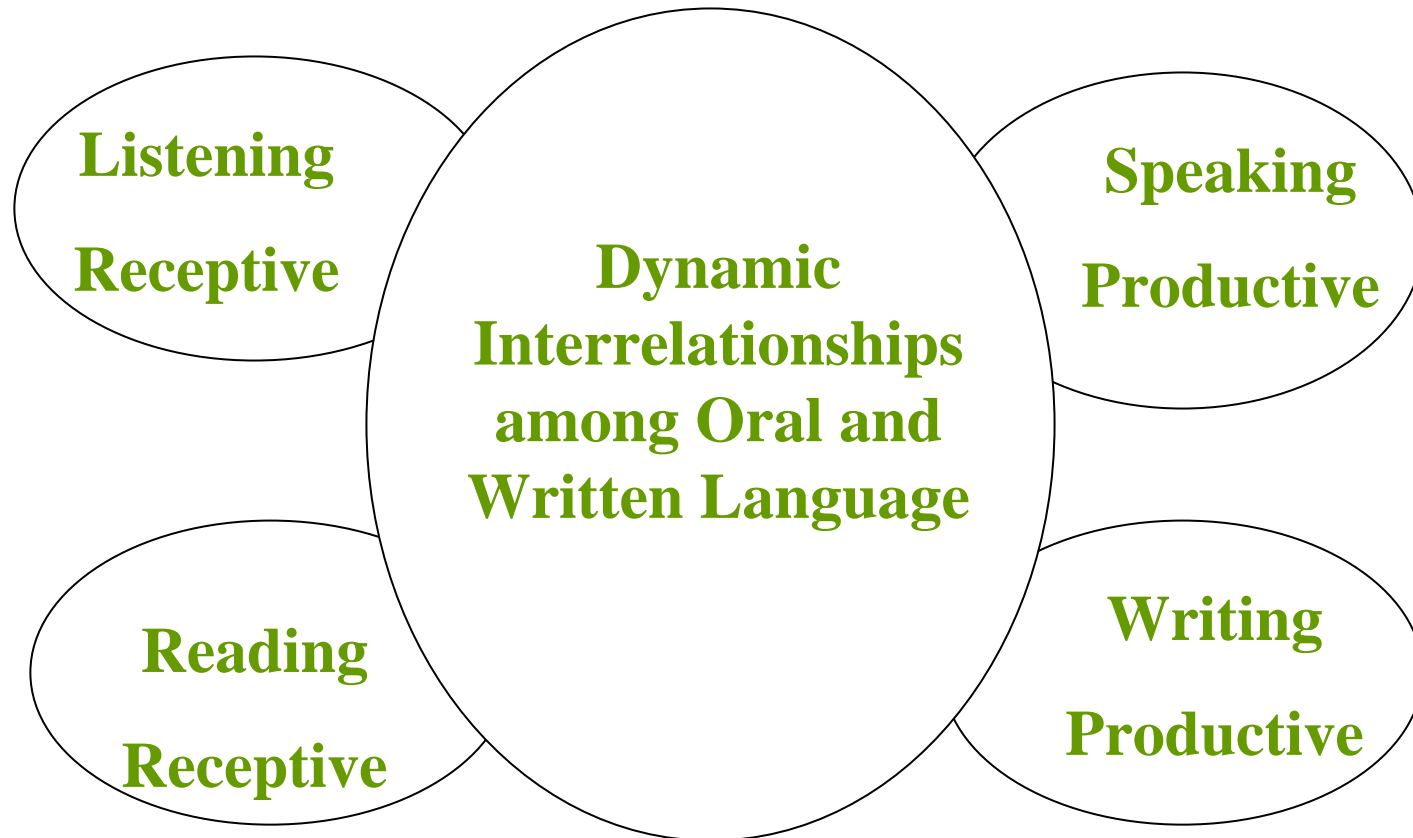
Receptive v. Productive



- **Receptive uses of language:**
 - Listening
 - Reading
- Messages are received by ear or by eye
- Meaning is reconstructed based partly on prior knowledge
- Active process

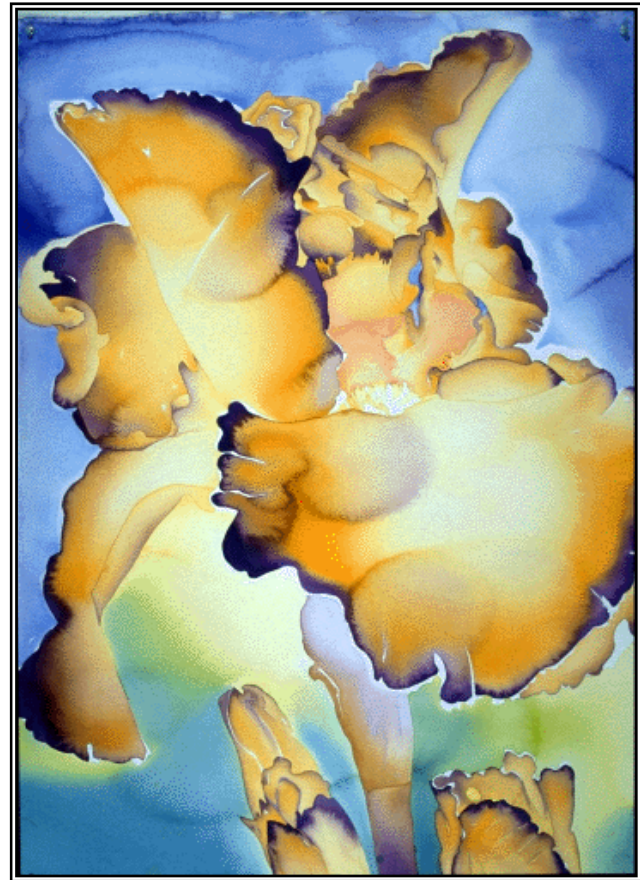
- **Productive uses of language:**
 - Speaking
 - Writing
- Messages are produced
- Messages are created for an audience
- Both active and passive process

Interrelationships



Learning Opportunities Must Include all Four Processes

- We move back and forth between oral and written modes during communication
- This type of recursive process must be present in the classroom
- Practical use of each language process provides:
 - Specific development in each
 - Promotes overall language development



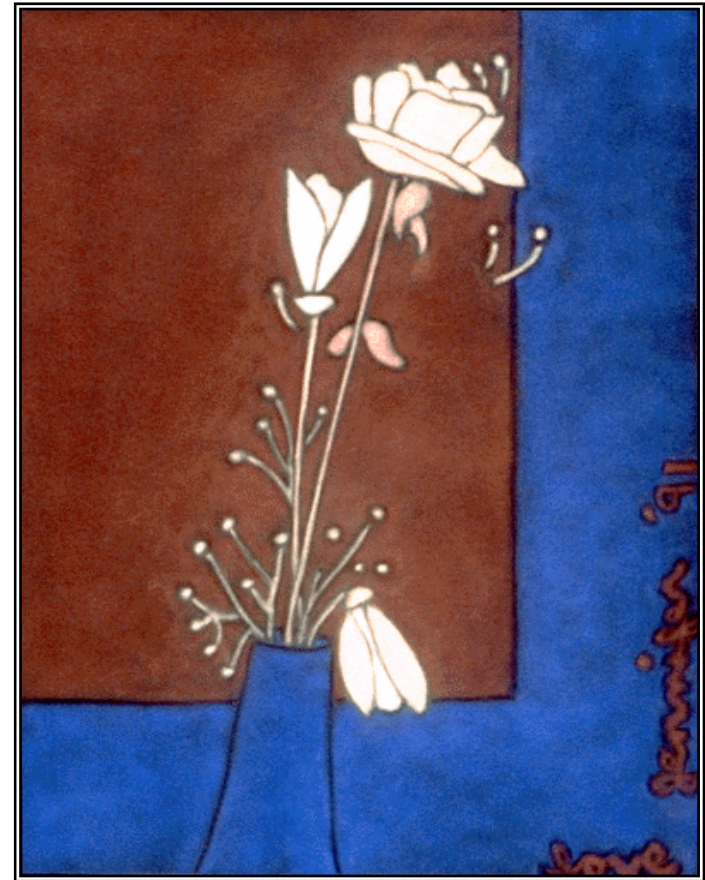
Form, Function, and Social Context in Oral Language Use



- **Teachers must consider:**
 - **Grammatical forms**
 - **Communicative functions**
 - **Social contexts**
 - **When and why to use certain types of language forms**
 - **Places different cognitive and social demands**
 - **Formal aspects of language**
 - **Phonology, morphology, syntax**

Halliday's Functional Categories

- Instrumental
- Regulatory
- Interactional
- Personal
- Heuristic
- Imaginative
- Informative
- Divertive



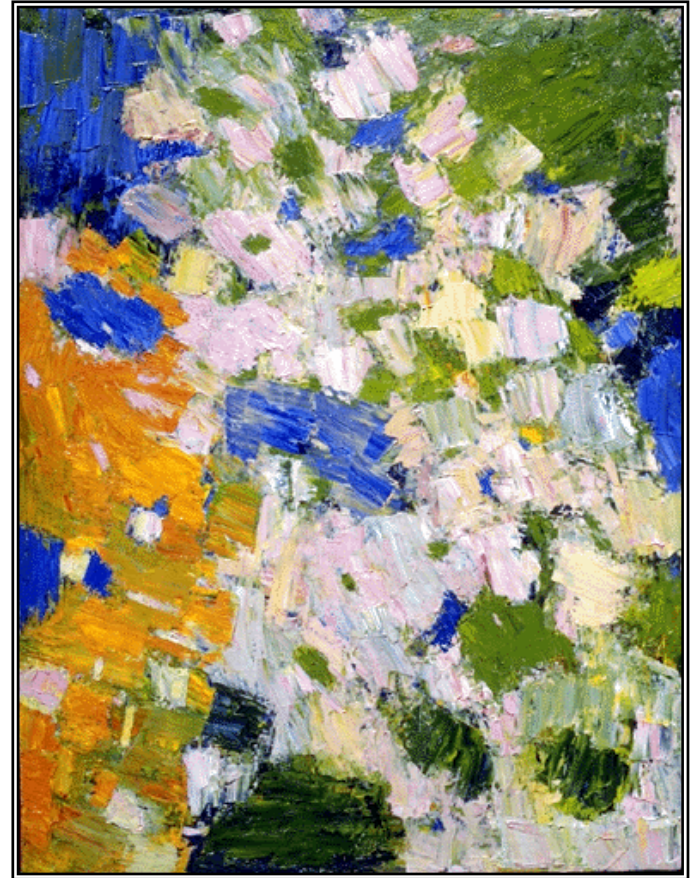
Oral Language Performance



- **Term: LEP**
 - Limited English Proficiency
 - **Beginning LEP**
 - Non-English speakers
 - Beginning speakers
 - **Intermediate LEP**
 - Limited, but functional
 - Functional
 - Be sure to offer choice for more advanced activities

L2 Oral Proficiency - Beginners

- Beginner phase starts immediately upon exposure to L2
- Soon after, comprehension develops
- Speaking occurs naturally shortly after
 - Utterances according to simple grammatical rules
 - Voice needs and purposes in formal and informal school settings
- Provide social-emotional support from:
 - Teacher and other students



L2 Proficiency - Intermediate



- Are able to understand and speak English in fact-to-face situations
- Speak with minimal hesitation
- Relatively few misunderstandings
- Some features of speech are not Standard English
- Teachers must:
 - Control need to constantly correct
 - Show interest by asking questions
 - Continue with sheltering activities

Promoting Oral Language Development in L2



- **Organize classroom to promote:**
 - Comprehensible input
 - Social interaction
- **Utilize routine instructional events:**
 - Circle time
 - Literature circles
 - Process Writing
 - Projects
 - Theme Studies

- **Maintain consistent structure**
- **Incorporate:**
 - Cues to convey meaning
 - Non-verbal cues
 - Dramatization
 - Gestures
 - Pictures, realia
 - Verbal Strategies such as paraphrasing, repeating vocabulary, and modeling

Classroom Strategies

- Songs
- Drama
- Dramatizing Poetry
- Show and Tell
- Tape Recording and Re-creating Wordless Books
- Taping a Newscast or TV Show
- Choral Reading
- Reader's Theater
- Riddles and Jokes
- Literature Groups/Circles



Oral Language and Math



- **Utilize:**
 - **Demonstration of concepts**
 - **Extensive use of manipulatives**
 - **Problem solving**
 - **Word problems**
 - **Math Vocabulary and language**
 - **Group work**

Oral Development and Science

- **Utilize:**
 - Cognitive demanding scientific language
 - Process-oriented activities (data collection, problem solving)
 - Inquiry-based Science
 - Investigating real problems
 - Hands-on activities
 - Group work that promotes talking and dialoging
- **Keep in mind: prior knowledge and cultural assumptions within the field of Science**



Oral Development and Social Studies



- **Utilize:**
 - Verbal descriptions
 - Films and discussions
 - Storytelling
 - Family histories and oral traditions
 - Group discussions
 - Pictures, graphs, flow charts, organizers
 - Simulations
- **Remember to:**
 - Present content using visuals
 - Incorporate analysis and dialog

The SOLOM – Student Oral Language Observation Matrix

- **Focuses on five traits:**
 - **Comprehension**
 - **Fluency**
 - **Vocabulary**
 - **Grammar**
 - **Pronunciation**
- **Create checklists using the SOLOM**
- **Utilized during day-to-day observations**
- **Assists in creating a rich profile of student progress**



Checklists and Anecdotal Records

- Forms and checklists should address:



- Participation Structures
 - Interaction patterns
 - Group interactions
- Language functions
 - Day-to-day interactions
 - Formal and informal
- Linguistic Elements
 - Grammar
 - Pronunciation
 - Student's ability to utilize these in discourse